



Wednesday, October 22, 2008

First Timers at the Festival

There's a wonderful diversity among first-time participants at the National Veterans Creative Arts Festivals. The many backgrounds and experiences that have brought each of you together this year enrich the event and are reflected in your many artistic accomplishments. More than 60, or about one half of the participants this week, are enjoying their first National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

Let's learn a little more about some of our first-timers.

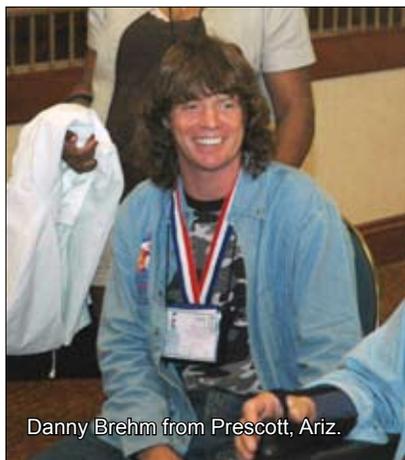


James "Jay" Braum, from Largo, Fla.

James "Jay" Braum, a decorated Army veteran from Largo, Fla., served in Vietnam from 1967-1970. His model, depicting a truck with trailer carrying a 1940 Ford, won in the model-building category. "I've been building models since I was a kid," said Braum. He finds the work not only helped him pass time during his recovery from surgery, but was also very therapeutic. He holds a Master's

Degree in art and taught at the University of Central Florida for several years. "This might be my first year at the Festival, but I sincerely hope it's not my last," he said.

Danny Brehm is an Army veteran who lives in Prescott, Ariz. A musician, he won in the original instrumental category for his song "So Long." Brehm, nicknamed "Word Warrior" by his friends, has been writing songs for 31 years. He was told he earned that name because of his "distinctive talent with lyrics." A dramatic change in his life led to his award-winning song. "I needed a song that could create some clo-



Danny Brehm from Prescott, Ariz.

sure, help me make tough decisions and move on," he explained. Though the song has special meaning to him, he writes his lyrics so that anyone who might be facing a challenge in their life can apply the words as well. Although he won't be singing his song on stage, he hopes to be able to sharing it with others during the week.

Verne Chapman, a Korean War veteran from Porterville, Calif., won in the metalwork category. His piece, "The Virgin Mary," was created from stainless steel. Chapman operated his own welding and machine shop for 48 years, and what began as a business evolved into a creative outlet. "Owning my own shop, I had all the tools I needed so I started to do a few pieces just for my own satisfaction," said Chapman. "Now, I have pieces on display at a variety of places – from religious themed work at a Catholic retreat to an aviation piece at Lockheed Martin Corporation in San Diego." He's given away more pieces than he has sold and is most pleased when others simply appreciate his work.



Verne Chapman from Porterville, Calif., shows his artwork to VA staffer Kathryn Petravage from San Antonio, Texas.

Army veteran Gretchen Rieck, from Albuquerque, N.M., entered creative work "Tiger," in the beadwork category. She has been creating art with beads for years. I was dealing with major health problems in 1999 and needed a project to take my mind off things," said Rieck. "I was in a bead store in Anchorage, Alaska, saw a piece that intrigued me and knew immediately it was the project that could help keep my mind and hands occupied." Most of her beaded pieces portray animals. She's excited to be attending her first Festival.

Really our "first timers" are no different than our "old timers." They all share a common passion for the arts and one thing you can be sure – all have brought something to the Festival to share and all will return home richer from the experience.

Stars of the Stage

Improving your singing is easy!

If you can breathe, relax and open your mouth, you can sing better. Your breath is the fuel for your instrument. If you do nothing else, getting a good breath to start each line of singing will help you sound better.

Start with your feet apart shoulder-width, or sit toward the front of your chair evenly on both of your "sit-bones." Your shoulders should be relaxed and down, not stiff or pulled back. Keep your chest high and don't slump over. Your head should be level, not pointing up or down with your chin. Imagine a string from the top of your head lifting it up, lengthening your neck and spine.

As you breathe in, feel your stomach, ribcage and the small of your back all expand. Imagine this space as a big balloon, filling up with water; it fills and expands the bottom first, and makes more room inside your ribcage. Don't raise your shoulders as you breathe in; this only creates tension, which is not good for singing and actually prevents you from breathing deeply.

Open your mouth – MUCH wider than you think. This is very difficult to do consistently while singing. Imagine taking a big

bite out of an apple – that's how far you should open. Keep your cheeks and lips relaxed and not pulled back. Practice this, especially on the vowels "ah", "eh" and "oh." When holding out a long note, keep your mouth open the entire time. You can look in a mirror to check yourself. For "ooh" keep your mouth open wider than you do for talking, making as much space inside your mouth as possible and keeping your lips forward. "Ee" is the trickiest, especially on higher notes. Again, keep your mouth as open as possible but still maintain the "ee." Be careful not to let the sides of your lips pull back, creating a squeaking tone. Think about flattening your tongue. For higher notes, it's better to let the "ee" become an "eh" or "ah" than to have a strained sound. It feels awkward, but it works.

Now that you're breathing, relaxed and opening your mouth, all you have to do is add the notes, the rhythm, the words, the entrances and cut-offs and you'll look like you're having fun! See? Singing is easy!



Stars of the Studio

How to Draw Anything

If you consider yourself to be artistically challenged, there's hope! The key is learning to really see what it is you are trying to draw. Sounds tricky, but by following the guidelines below, you'll be on your way to drafting better pictures, one sharpened pencil at a time.

Tools You'll Need:

- Pencils: #2, #4, #6, #8
- Large drawing pad
- Small metal pencil sharpener

Step 1 - You must practice and then practice some more. Keep your pencils sharpened. Believe the paper is free and that you can use all you want without hurting your pocketbook.

Step 2 - Find an object that interests you, like an old tennis shoe, a gnarly old tree, or even your own hand.

Step 3 - Using the #6 pencil, place the pencil on the paper where you want to start drawing. Without looking at the paper, look instead at the edge of the article you want to draw. Allow your eye to move very, very slowly around the edge of the item. As you do this, let your pencil follow along on the paper.

You are learning to coordinate your eyes with your hand. Do not lift your pencil from the paper.

Step 4 - Work very slowly and do not rush the process. Your first few attempts may not be good, but you'll improve over time.

Step 5 - Try to draw large and loose, not small and cramped.

Drawing large will help you later when you are drawing something small.

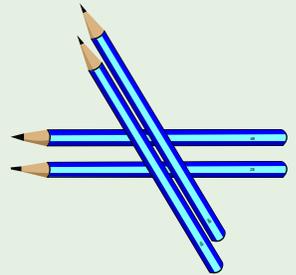
Step 6 - As you draw, allow your eye to travel along creases, crevices, etc.

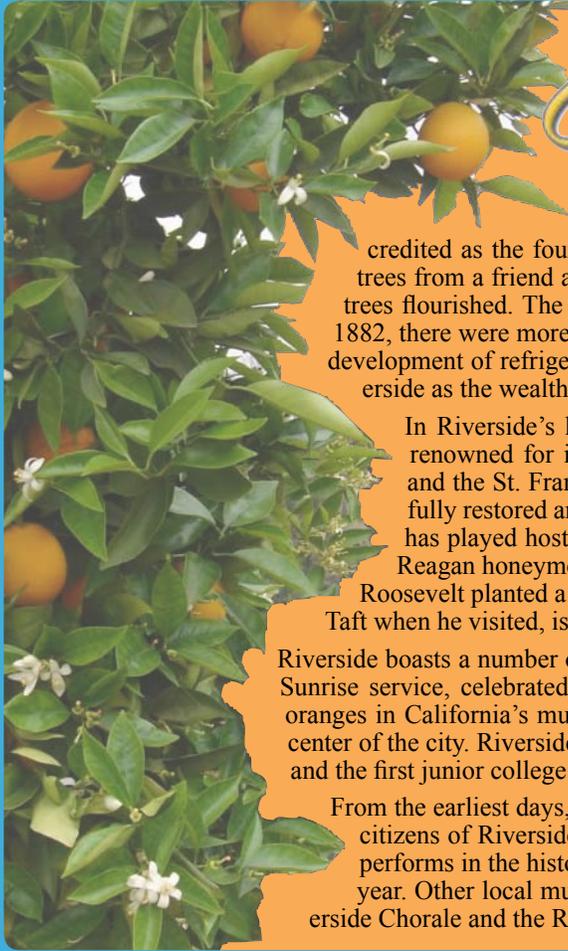
Step 7 - Don't worry if your ending place doesn't meet your starting place. Eventually, it will. After you have done many, many drawings this way, you may begin to look back and forth between the object and your paper.

Step 8 - The lesson is to learn to draw what your eye actually sees, not what your brain is telling you the object looks like. If you do this, you will see vast improvements in your work.

Step 9 - After you have practiced these contour drawings for awhile, try them with your less dominant hand. This is where you will create some very interesting drawings.

See, it isn't so hard. Continue to practice and have fun!





California

History of Riverside

Riverside, Calif. was founded in 1870 by John North and a group of Easterners who were seeking to build a home dedicated to furthering education and culture. Three years later, Eliza Tibbets, who is now credited as the founder of the California citrus industry, received two Brazilian navel orange trees from a friend at the Department of Agriculture in Washington, DC. Both the town and the trees flourished. The Southern California climate was perfect for the navel orange industry. By 1882, there were more than half a million citrus trees in California, half of them in Riverside. The development of refrigerated railroad cars and improvements in irrigation systems established Riverside as the wealthiest city per capita by 1895.

In Riverside's heart, downtown Mile Square, you'll find the historic Mission Inn Hotel, renowned for its Spanish Mission architecture. Both its beautiful stained glass windows and the St. Francis Chapel's valuable gold altar came from Mexico. The Mission has been fully restored and welcomes guests as a first-class hotel and major tourist attraction. The inn has played host to numerous movie stars, musicians and heads of state. Ronald and Nancy Reagan honeymooned there, and Richard and Pat Nixon were married on its grounds. Teddy Roosevelt planted a tree in its courtyard, and a special chair, built for President William Howard Taft when he visited, is still in the inn.

Riverside boasts a number of notable facts. It is the site of the first outdoor interdenominational Easter Sunrise service, celebrated annually. The "Parent Navel Orange Tree," from which all of the navel oranges in California's multi-million dollar citrus industry descended, still flourishes in a park in the center of the city. Riverside also had the first polo field and the first golf course in Southern California, and the first junior college in the state.

From the earliest days, education and the arts have been of extreme importance to the citizens of Riverside. Arts venues include the Riverside County Philharmonic, which performs in the historic Riverside Municipal Auditorium from November to May each year. Other local musical and dance groups include the Riverside Ballet Theatre, Riverside Chorale and the Riverside Children's Theatre.



Therapeutic Arts Scholarship

An exciting new scholarship is being offered in 2009 for veterans entering the Creative Arts Competition. The "Therapeutic Arts Scholarship" will cover lodging and meals at the festival for those lucky veterans selected by the National Committee. Veterans

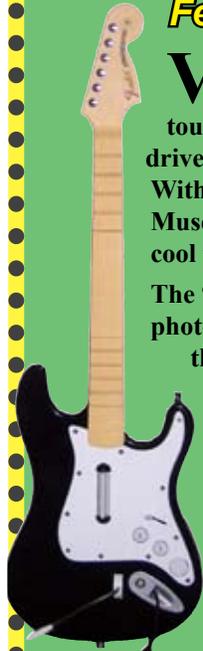
who can benefit from the Festival experience can be nominated by their VA staff for this exciting award.

To be eligible, a veteran must be nominated by a VA staff member based on a therapeutic objective. A narrative explaining the therapeutic benefits that he or she will receive from the Festival must accompany the veteran's creative arts entry. The veteran must be entered in at least one category in any of the five divisions. Nominations are open to first time participants at the festival but not necessarily first time Creative Arts participants. Criteria and application forms will be in the 2009 competition book.

A trial run of the Scholarship was held this year with three winners selected. The winners are in attendance this year and are visual artist, Mike Aschenbrenner from Tomah, WI, and performing artists, John Hooks from Albany, New York and Earle Miller of Milwaukee, WI. All three were nominated by their local music therapists.

We would like to congratulate the recipients of this year's "Therapeutic Arts Scholarship" and encourage all staff members to consider nominating a worthy veteran from your facility for the 2009 scholarships.

Fender Guitar Museum Tour



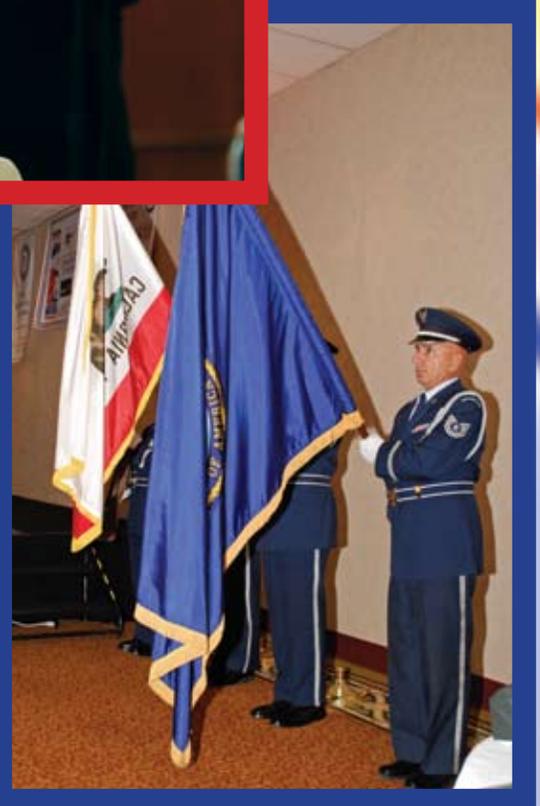
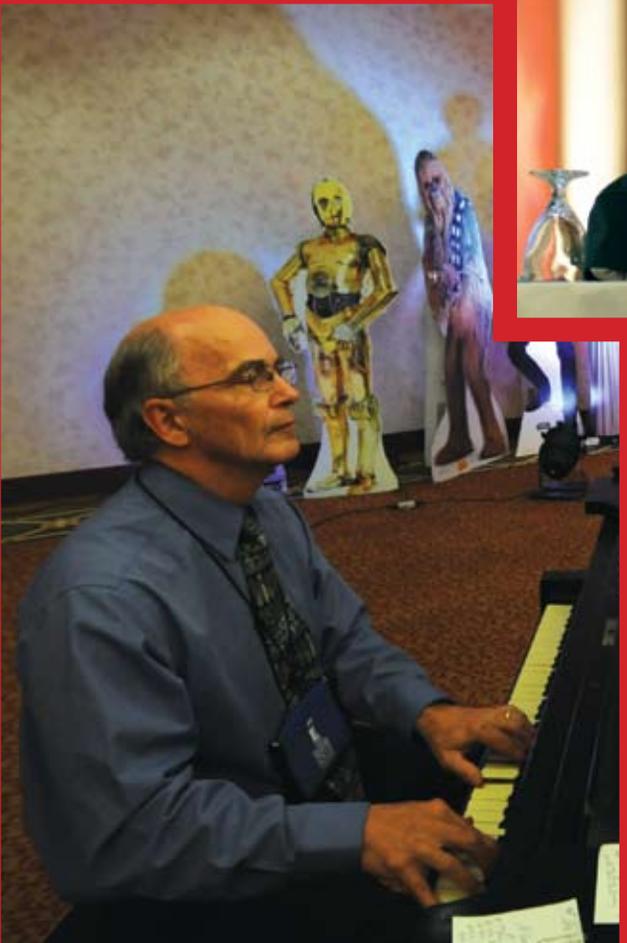
Veteran artists will get their chance to 'Rock the House'—Fender style—as they tour the Fender Guitar Museum, only a short drive away from Riverside, from 1-3 p.m. today. With a new look and feel, the Fender Guitar Museum is hot with vibrant color and ultra cool with new lighting showcasing its exhibits.

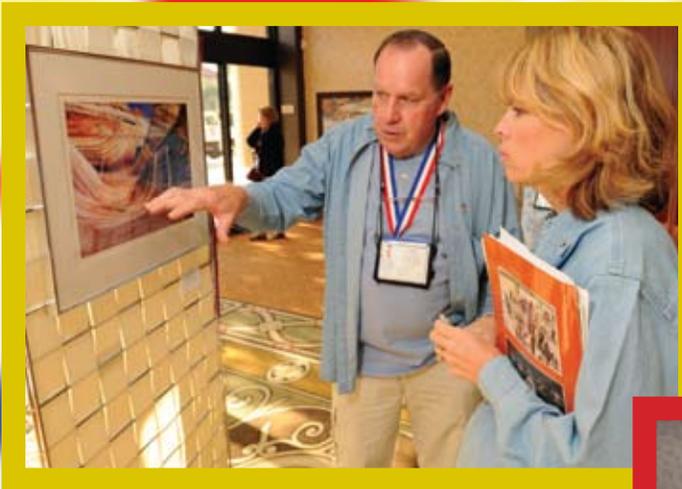
The "Wall of Friends" exhibit features concert photos from the many great shows hosted by the museum. Historic concerts included musical artists Steve Miller, Merle Haggard, Joe Walsh, Etta James, the Turtles, John Waite, Paul Rodgers and Dick Dale.

Around every corner, walls of Fender amplifiers await your eyes, along with guitars used and autographed by some of music's most famous contemporary performers. Notable pieces are the guitars once played by Johnny Cash, Dick Dale and Kurt Cobain.

A hub of rock history memorabilia and a school for future musicians, the Fender Guitar Museum is sure to be a highlight of your week at this year's Festival!

Festival Photos





Today's Workshops and CEU Session:

Stepping Stones Workshop
Wednesday and Thursday
11 a.m., La Sierra Room

Parlez Vous Mosaics?

If you think French food is yummy, consider the beautiful pottery your soup du jour is served in. Chipped or broken, it may find a useful second life decorating a picture frame or your back yard bird feeder. Those clever French! Who'd have thought they'd come up with a way to recycle beauty. We're talking mosaics. It's not a difficult skill to learn. You're only limited by your imagination. Give it a try at the "Stepping Stones" Workshop. Local artesian and retired occupational therapist Ada Jarvis will conduct the Picassiette workshop. (You see, you're speaking French already.) Picassiette means "joy of shards." Jarvis will teach you to make a "Stepping Stone" for your garden or for use as a decorative piece.



Creative Dramatic Writing
Workshop
7-8:30 p.m., Orangetrest Room,
Marriott Hotel

Writing for Wounded Warriors

Ever wonder about dramatic creative writing! According to workshop presenters John Spalla and Sibyl O'Malley, "Creative writing is generally a very personal expression of the author's thoughts and ideas transmitted to an individual reader. Dramatic writing, however, demands the communal experience of sharing the author's words aloud, as transmitted through a character's voice and actions."

Learn the techniques of dramatic monologue, while being introduced to The National Theatre Workshop of the Handicapped (NTWH) and its Writers' Program for Wounded Warriors. Spalla and O'Malley are adjunct faculty for the NTWH Writers' Program for Wounded Warriors.

CEU Session
4 p.m., Orangetrest Room,
Marriott Hotel

Disability and Theatre

Come join John Spalla, dean, musical director and instructor, and Sibyl O'Malley, adjunct faculty for The National Theatre Workshop of the Handicapped (NTWH) Writers' Program for Wounded Warriors, as they demonstrate how the imagination knows no physical boundaries. "Theatre arts training is all about training the imagination as well as stimulating and challenging the intellect," they say. Writing and acting can help provide self-motivation, self-confidence, and imaginative thinking - the basics for making the transition to living a more fulfilling life with a permanent physical disability. Instructors will give an introduction to theatre games and other techniques. The NTWH Writers' Program for Wounded Warriors will also be presented. This innovative training program helps newly disabled soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan tell their stories and transition to life with a disability.

Artist Interaction Session

Tuesday's Artist Interaction Session was enjoyed by participating veterans as they met with friends, family, VA staff, and the media to discuss and share their award winning artwork.

Leilani Corley enjoyed the session immensely. Her needlework piece, a cross stitch entitled, "The Guardian," took 1000 hours to complete. "As artists we continue to be amazed at each other's work, one might be amazed by my talent and I am equally amazed by what they have created," said Corley.



Charles Marshall displays his sculpture "A Band of Brothers."



Leilani Corley poses with her needlework piece, "The Guardian."

"I knew that the heart of this tree was going to challenge me, and greatly test my faith and ability to put my mind to work," Charles Marshall said of his sculpture. "After deep prayer, I thought about what God had laid in my heart. I knew that the theme would be, 'A Band of Brothers.'"

The San Bernadino Sun covered the Artist Interaction Session and interviewed artist Fred Loftin and his Applied Art, Mixed Media piece, "Spirit Shirt Set."



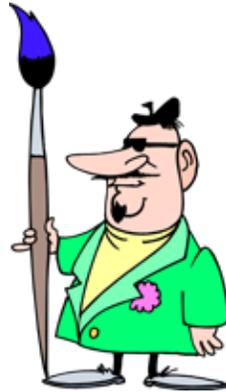
The **Medical Suite** is located in the **Marriot Hotel, Room 901 & 902**.

Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The Medical Suite phone number, if you are calling **inside** the Hotel, is **extension 7901**. **Outside** of the Hotel, call **(951) 784-8000** and ask for **Room 901**.

Participants should inform their team leader(s) of any medical concerns, and the team leaders will then assist with contacting the Medical Suite. Medical personnel will accompany veterans and support personnel on all trips away from the hotel.

The **Hospitality Suite** is located in the **Marriott Hotel, Suite 1228** and is open today for your convenience. The wonderful volunteers in the hospitality suite have snacks and drinks available if you need something – along with a lot of welcoming smiles!



Hours of operation for the week of the Festival are as follows:	
Wednesday, October 22	9 a.m. to 11 p.m.
Thursday, October 23	9 a.m. to 11 p.m.
Friday, October 24	9 a.m. to Midnight
Saturday, October 25	9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; and 8:30 - 11 p.m.
Sunday, October 26	10 a.m. to Noon; and 10 p.m. - Midn



Daily Menu

Wednesday, October 22, 2008

Meals will be served in Raincross Ballroom in the RCC unless otherwise designated.

Breakfast: 7 - 8:30 a.m.

Lunch: Noon - 1 p.m.

Dinner: 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Breakfast - South of the Border Buffet

Southwestern Frittata; Sliced Fresh Fruit Tray; Warm Flour Tortillas; Chipotle Red Potatoes; Oatmeal and Dry Cereals; Assorted Muffins; Orange Juice, Apple Juice & Tomato Juice; Milk (Soy Milk available upon request); Coffee, Hot Tea

Lunch - Deli Sandwich Buffet

Tossed Garden Green Salad with Ranch and Italian Dressings; Potato Salad; Fresh Fruit Salad; Fresh Baked Breads and Rolls; Smoked Ham, Smoked Turkey and Roast Beef; Sliced Tomatoes, Lettuce, Pickles and Bermuda Onions; Mustards and Mayonnaise; Potato Chips; Assorted Cookies and Brownies; Coffee, Hot Tea & Iced Tea

Dinner - Italian Buffet

Caesar Salad; Tri-Colored Pasta Salad; Vegetable; Lasagna; Chicken Cacciatore; Fresh Seasonal Vegetables; Garlic Bread; Tiramisu and New York Cheesecake; Coffee, Hot Tea & Iced Tea



Just 4 Grins



Early American Electric Guitar

VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

Thank you to those veterans who have already recorded their military histories for the Veterans

History Project (VHP). You have helped make history!

Interviews continue through Saturday in the University Room on the first floor of the Marriott hotel. Artists – stop by in between workshops and trips, and performers, come over when you aren't busy rehearsing! Sign up for your interview with Steve Hollingshead in the VHP taping room. This historic project honors our nation's veterans by creating a lasting legacy of their military experience. Last year, we had outstanding results in St. Louis at the 2007 Festival.

The VHP taping schedule for today through Friday is from 8 a.m. – noon and from 1 – 5 p.m. Be a part of this important national effort.

Wednesday, October 22

Star Artists

Star Performers

8 a.m.	Team leaders and support staff meet with National Art Chairperson – RCC Aviators East, 2nd Floor
8:30 a.m.	Team leaders and support staff meet with artists
9 a.m. – 11 p.m.	Hospitality Room Open at Marriott Hotel – Suite 1228
9 – 11 a.m.	Art Workshop #1 “Stepping Stones” at RCC La Sierra
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Lunch – RCC Raincross Ballroom
12:15 p.m.	Load buses to Fender Guitar Museum
12:30 p.m.	Buses Depart
1 – 3:30 p.m.	Fender Guitar Museum tour
3:30 p.m.	Load buses to return
4 – 5:30 p.m.	Education Session: Disability and Theatre: How Arts Training Can Benefit Persons With Disabilities in Their Everyday Lives – Marriott Hotel, Orangecrest Room
5:30 - 6:45 p.m.	Dinner – RCC Raincross Ballroom
7 – 8:30 p.m.	Creative Dramatic Writing Workshop – Disability and Theatre: How Arts Training Can Benefit Persons With Disabilities in Their Everyday Lives – Marriott Hotel, Orangecrest Room
9 – 11 p.m.	Karaoke and Ice Cream Social – Marriott Hotel, Orangecrest Room

7 – 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast – Raincross Ballroom, 1st floor
8 a.m.	Team leaders & support staff meet with Amy Kimbler – De Anza North
8:30 a.m.	Team leaders & support staff meet with performers
9 – 10 a.m.	Chorus member photos (wear white shirts and vests) – Aviators West
9 – 11 a.m.	Rehearsal of individual acts with directors as scheduled – Ben Lewis Hall (Photos of chorus members taken)
9 – 11 a.m.	Chorus Number rehearsals with Gary/Jerry (& sectional assistants if necessary) – De Anza North
9 a.m. – 11 p.m.	Hospitality Room Open at Marriott Hotel – Suite 1228
11 – Noon	Production numbers stage placement (ALL veterans and staff needed) – Ben Lewis Hall
Noon – 1 p.m.	Lunch – Raincross Ballroom
1 – 5 p.m.	Complete run-thru in show order, including chorus numbers, stopping to fix problems, we will get as far through the show as we can – ALL VETERANS NEEDED – Ben Lewis Hall Chorus vests/costume fittings – Aviators West
4 – 5:30 p.m.	Education Session: Disability and Theatre: How Arts Training Can Benefit Persons With Disabilities in Their Everyday Lives – Marriott Hotel, Orangecrest Room
5:30 – 6:45 p.m.	Dinner – Raincross Ballroom
7 – 8:30 p.m.	Finish show run-thru and then rehearse individual acts with directors as scheduled – Ben Lewis Hall (Performers should inform their team leaders if they wish to attend the Creative Writing Workshop at the Marriott.)
7 – 8:30 p.m.	Chorus Number rehearsals with Gary/Jerry – De Anza North
7 – 8:30 p.m.	Individual work with production number soloists – University and Aviators, 2nd floor
7 – 8:30 p.m.	Creative Dramatic Writing Workshop – Disability and Theatre: How Arts Training Can Benefit Persons With Disabilities in Their Everyday Lives – Marriott Hotel, Orangecrest Room
9 – 11 p.m.	Karaoke and Ice Cream Social – Marriott Hotel, Orangecrest Room

Internet Cafe

Where: Northeast Foyer
Riverside Convention Center

When: Tuesday, October 21 -
Saturday, October 25

Hours: 7 - 8:30 a.m.
11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
7 - 9 p.m.
(Not open Thursday
or Saturday evening)



Provided by Hewlett Packard



Weather for October:
Average low - 53°
Average high - 83°
Average of .26 inches
of rain for the month

Today's Weather
Low - 53°
High - 95°
Sunny and windy!

Please check with your team leader and/or the posted schedule outside of Ben Lewis Hall for any changes or updates to your daily schedule.

NVCAF WEB SITE
www.creativeartsfestival.va.gov

This year's National Veterans Creative Arts Festival is an experience you will never forget. You can share your experiences with your friends and family back home by providing them with the Festival Web site address. The *ARTSGRAM* is posted there every day with all the latest on what is happening – including photos from rehearsals, workshops and tours.